

Director's Report May 2011

Budget Update

Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) is still facing substantial budget challenges, on top of the \$11.5 million or 28.5% in cuts we have taken between FY08 and FY11. Both the County Executive and County Council members have made proposals to start moving away from further library cuts, but the outcome is still uncertain at this point.

Library services advocates have steadily been contacting the County Executive and County Council to support a unified theme, "Libraries Matter – No More Cuts."

The County Council's Health and Human Services Committee (George Leventhal, Chair; Nancy Navarro; and Craig Rice) reviewed the MCPL budget in two sessions (April 14 and May 2) and are collaboratively endorsing full Council approval of the County Executive's April 26 amendments. Additionally, they are recommending that the County Council further add up to \$1,333,300 to the MCPL budget to restore most of the service and staffing reductions that Mr. Leggett's April 26 amendment did not restore.

The full County Council reviewed the MCPL budget on May 16. The County Council is tentatively set to make its final budget decisions on May 26. Interested persons should call the County Council at 240-777-7900 or monitor the schedule of budget worksessions at the [County Council's website](#) – see "Budget Update."

I want to thank all of our advocates and supporters who have been diligent in speaking out about the importance and impact of libraries in communities.

Changes in Library Policy and Fees

The following changes in library policy and fees will take effect on Wednesday, June 1:

- Library card accounts of customers who owe \$25 or more in fines will be blocked. This is an expansion of our current policy to include public internet computers.
- Library card accounts must be clear of all fines and fees before the account can be renewed each year.
- Customers who do not pick up their hold(s) after 10 days will be assessed a fee of \$1 per hold. If holds are no longer needed, customers are encouraged to cancel online or by calling Ask-a-Librarian at 240-777-0001.

These policies are intended to ensure that library materials are accessible to customers in a timely manner, to encourage customers to effectively manage their library card accounts, and to ensure accuracy of customer account information.

I also encourage all of our customers to sign up for email notification. Email notification is an easy and effective way for customers to manage their library card account. Once customers sign up, they receive email reminders about important account information such as holds ready for pick up and renewals.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

MCPL received over 6,500 responses to our Customer Satisfaction Survey held during National Library Week in April. This survey was a follow-up to our 2008 Customer Satisfaction Survey. Approximately 4,000 survey participants provided written feedback about how the Library was doing in achieving its mission. Results of the survey will be published in the very near future. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who provided this valuable feedback about how the library can better meet the needs of customers.

Expanded Help for Job Seekers

Free workshops in basic computing skills, conducted by Office Pro, will be presented at the Germantown, Long Branch and Rockville Memorial libraries beginning in late May. During the three-hour workshop, participants will learn: how to use the keyboard and other basic computing skills, how to create and save a basic Word document and how to use the internet to search employment sites and apply for jobs.

Online registration is required. All workshops will take place from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. To locate scheduled dates for these workshops and to register, please visit our [website](#).

Program Highlights

Come and enjoy a very special author event at the Chevy Chase Library on May 21 at 2 p.m. The **Many Flavors of Romance** features romance writers Catherine Asaro, Nebula Award winner for her novel, **The Quantum Rose**; Diane Wylie, author of historical romance and adventure; and New York Times Best Selling author, Rebecca York (aka Ruth Glick). This event promises to be an afternoon of fun and exciting conversation! Copies of the authors' books will be available for purchase and signing.

Summer Reading Program News

Summer Reading 2011 @ MCPL begins June 18 and runs through August 13. Online registration begins June 15. We will officially kick off the Summer Reading Program for kids at the Aspen Hill Library on Saturday, June 18. The celebration begins at 11 a.m. with Two-Time Grammy winning folk artist, Cathy Fink and Grammy-Nominated Hip-Hop artist ChristyLez Bacon (pronounced Chris Styles). After the program, stay around for a while and enjoy some balloon twisting fun with Dee Vinchey.

Teen author, Sarah Dessen will help kick off Teen Summer Reading at the Bethesda Library on June 16 at 7 p.m. Ms. Dessen is the author of several novels, including **Someone Like You, Just Listen** and **Along for the Ride**. Her tenth novel, **What Happened to Goodbye**, was just published in May.

A variety of events for children and teens are scheduled to take place at MCPL this summer. Programs include: Mike Rose Magic, Jesse and James and Mutts Gone Nuts, Maryland Zoo in Baltimore, Mad Science of Washington, Reptiles Alive, author events, Anime and Manga workshops, a Poetry Slam and much more!

All of our special programs and Summer Reading programs are made possible through funding support from the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc. and local Friends of the Library chapters.

Please visit our website for updates and a complete listing of summer program information. Things are happening all summer long @ MCPL. Come and Check Us Out!

B. Parker Hamilton
Director